VARIETY,

OR,

WHICH IS THE MAN?

A POEM.

Dedicated to LADY W**SL*Y.

Variety is charming,
Variety is charming;
For Conſtancy
Is not for me,
So *Dick*, I give you warning.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for SWIFT and SON, at their Circulating Library, Charles-Street, St. James's.
MDCCLXXXII.
Price ONE SHILLING.

VARIETY;

OR,

WHICH IS THE MAN?

A FARCE.

Dedicated to LADY W**SLEY.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for Owen and Son, at the Globe, in Paternoster Row, Corner of Ave-Maria Lane.

MDCCLXXIII.

Price ONE SHILLING.

DEDICATION.

TO

LADY W**SL*Y.

MADAM,

YOU muſt not be ſurprized if you here find a wide Alteration from the uſual Style of Dedications. The Idea which is generally underſtood in penning theſe Compoſitions, is to dwell upon the Character, and enumerate the Actions of the Perſons addreſſed, attended with a long Train of Panegyrics, and lay out a conſiderable Space in forming elegant Compliments.

But your Ladyſhip has compelled me to deviate from this general Mode. You have ſuſtained a Character which cannot poſſibly be commented upon but with the utmoſt ſeverity. You have accuſtomed yourſelf in the Performance of Actions, ſince your firſt

Knowledge of Senſibility, that cannot be related without offending the delicate Hearing of *Modeſty*.

Your Ladyſhip has placed it in my Power to diſplay here a horrid Picture of Infamy. You who have ran thro' all the changes and viciſſitudes of Diſſipation---have openly plunged yourſelf into the Gulph of *Carnal Variety*, without pourtraying even an inclination of Reluctance.

When I firſt entertained an Idea of writing a Poem on the ſubject of *Variety*, I confeſs I was for ſome Time at a loſs, who it ſhould be Addreſſed to---but your Ladyſhip has compaſſionately eaſed me of that embarraſſed Situation, by publicly ſupporting a Character to which this poetic Trifle is Dedicated with infinite propriety.

I am, MADAM,

Your moſt obedient, and moſt devoted humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

VARIETY,

OR,

WHICH IS THE MAN?

WHEN e'er we read poetic pages,
The thoughts of men of diſtant ages,
We may perceive from out their brains,
Flew diff'rent ſubjects, diff'rent ſtrains.

APOLLO, one invokes to aid
His feeble lay, to grace a maid,
Implores his pow'r, and heav'nly art,
The charms of beauty to impart.

Others intreat, by Fancy fir'd,
With thoughts of war to be inſpir'd;
To ſhew the 'ſcapes of ſlaughter's field,
To ſtain that heart which deign'd to yield;
To drag the coward from his den,
And ſhew him to the ſcorn of men.
Some aſk the aid of gentler muſe,
When Mars has ſtopp'd his trump of news,
To waft o'er all the calming world,
Where War his banners had unfurl'd,
The ſweets of Peace—that Goddeſs bright!
That nurſe to Cupid's ſoft delight!
Others in calm and gentle hours,
Have try'd to paint ſoft muſic's pow'rs;
Have ſtrove to prove,—that ſtealing art
Will melt the moſt obdurate heart;
Will raiſe the turbid mind from care,
And lull that boſom-fiend, deſpair.

Few

Few poets yet, tho' liv'd to ſee,
Have ſung that charm, *Variety:*
'Tis odd, tho' each oft felt its force,
Allow'd its univerſal courſe,
Perceiv'd its influence ev'ry day,
And ſpoke its arbitrary ſway,
The thought ne'er ſtruck to grace a lay?

Come, all ye Nine, inſpiring throng!
Deſcend apace, to aid my ſong;
Bring each her charm, her diff'rent pow'r,
Bring all that grace Apollo's bow'r
T' inſpire my mind, ſince 'tis my lot
To ſing that theme, ſo long forgot.

Variety I own's a treaſure,
A ſweet diverſity of pleaſure,
Conceiv'd by *all*, in ev'ry ſtation,
That fill the univerſal nation:
But yet with ſafety I may ſay,
O'er *women* it has ſtrongeſt ſway;

From

From them the paſſion can't deſert—
—The world will prove what I aſſert.

Young Miſs, the ſunſhine of a day,
Thro' luxury will wing her way;
In diſſipation's field will rove,
Will ſacrifice the vows of love;
The chequer'd ſcenes of vice ſhe'll trace,
Without one bluſh to veil her face—
Thro' folly's ways of that, and this,
Why will ſhe go?—In ſearch of bliſs.
And happineſs ('tis plain to me)
By woman's meant, *Variety*.

W—s—y (great Lady of renown,
The talk and ſcandal of a town)
Diſdaining to make a ſtrange mutation
In her own ſex's reputation,
Knowing her kindred's appetites,
Follow'd *Variety*'s delights;

Undaunted

Undaunted rov'd thro' *carnal pleaſures*,
Without reſerve to hide her meaſures;
Deſpiſing that poor bauble, *Honour*,
Takes ſhame and infamy upon-her.
Methinks I ſee her inmoſt thoughts,
When virtue points her practis'd faults;
When raillery on every tongue,
With ſatire burſting from the ſong,
O'ertakes her in her ſhameful ways,
Methinks I hear what Fancy ſays,
What to herſelf her mind dictates——
" And what care I for theſe debates
" Throughout the world, concerning my
" Long practis'd ſchemes of infamy?
" The world may talk in praiſe of Fame,
" To Merit give the empty name;
" May in the conſecrated dome,
" Fix emblems on the mimic tomb,
" May give to virtue, virtue's due,
" To animate the public view,

" And yet my heart can't help expreſſing,
" That this *good name*'s not worth careſſing.
" People ſhould hold this reputation,
" I own, as ſacred thro' a nation;
" 'Tis policy—the laws require it,
" But *Nature*, *Nature* don't deſire it,
" At leaſt with me—why not obey
" Then Nature's dictates, Nature's ſway?
" We all in this great world were ſent
" To find that jewel rich, CONTENT:
" Some find it (appetites deprave)
" In the dark chambers of a cave;
" Others (tho' few) with fleeting hours,
" Will find it lodg'd in Hymen's bow'rs;
" Some, buſied in the buſy life,
" Will think *Content* conſiſts of ſtrife;
" Some ſeek the charm from abſent home,
" And find it on the briny foam;
" Others have caught it (thinking ſages)
" Traverſing old poetic pages:

" Now,

" Now, I thro' many paths have trod
" To find this ſecret-hiding God;
" And yet thro' all my diff'rent chaſes
" I know but now where fix'd his place-is.
" Hearing in faſhion he reſides,
" Is felt by all the faſhion'd tribes,
" Pleas'd with the thought, I gladly rov'd,
" And trac'd thoſe ſcenes ſo much belov'd;
" Not only *follow'd* its entices,
" But *introduc'd* new forms of vices.
" Each luxury my mind created
" I glutted on with taſte unfated,
" But fruitleſs hours my labours ſpent,
" In vain I ſtrove to find *Content*.

" But yet thro' vice my fancy ſuited,
" My *modeſt fame* was ne'er polluted;
" I then reſolv'd the mode to try,
" Of taſting *carnal infamy*;

" And

" And there renew my ſearch, to find
" That *antidote* ſo long behind:
" I took, without reſerve or dread,
" A crew alternate to my bed:
" The firſt of this ſtrange motley crew
" Was a rich, old, fantaſtic *Jew*;
" But finding he but prov'd a *toyer*,
" I next connected with a *Lawyer*;
" His *deeds*, his *actions*, I muſt own,
" Were far the beſt I then had known;
" But ſoon not finding what I ſcanted,
" What I ſo long and greatly wanted,
" That bliſs *Content*—Reſolv'd in mind,
" To ſearch and ſearch, until I find.
" Unfortunate, alas! for me,
" The next was born in *Italy*;
" To fight he look'd an *able* rake,
" But ſoon I found the curs'd miſtake—
" The Loit'rer——but let me ſcout-him—
" God knows, I know enough about-him.

" Th'

" Th' impreſſion that this *feeble* Swain,
" Made on my poor affrighted brain,
" I thought I ne'er ſhou'd try again.
" But that quick thought, as quickly fled,
" For ſoon without the thought of dread,
" I brought a new ſet to my bed.
" All diff'rent theſe poor garbage were,
" Some fat, ſome lean, ſome brown, ſome fair;
" In ſhort thro' ev'ry change I went,
" But ne'er cou'd find to keep *Content*.
" To higher folks I now repair'd,
" And with *that* claſs my favors ſhar'd,
" With numbers high in mighty fame
" A liſt too tedious here to name.
" D——ST, I own, with ſtrange endeavours,
" Kept, for a while, my conſtant favors,
" His ſhowy form and youthful prime,
" Pleas'd, I confeſs—but for a time—
" With him I cloy'd—my heart was free,—
" I try'd again *Variety*.

" With P—R—GH took my ſearch,
" With G——M —left him in the *lurch.*
" With W—D—M *gentle moments* ſpent,
" But all in vain to find Content.
" Weary, fatigu'd, a fruitleſs rover,
" So long a univerſal lover,
" Reſolv'd to make my ſearches over;
" Determin'd now to end my meaſures,
" But not to ſtop my carnal pleaſures;
" In ev'ry way to change my ſtation,
" Not try to gain my reputation;
" For that's not worth a ſingle pain,
" A moment's puzzle to the brain.
" Fix'd and determin'd was the thought,
" To think no more of what I ſought,
" When B*ss*T, deck'd with killing grace,
" With beauty beaming from his face,
" Caught my inceſſant wand'ring eyes!
" Ah! then I felt Love's true ſurpriſe!

" My

" My charms 'fore him, my manners meek,
" I oft diſplay'd with modeſt cheek.
" Gave him full time when mounted high, *
" To gaze, and feaſt his raviſh'd eye;
" That nothing ſhou'd obſtruct his peep,
" I, cautious, went but ancle deep.
" With him I found, when him I ſu'd,
" That charm, CONTENT, ſo long purſu'd.
" Among the variegated trains
" Of all my nightly-pleaſing Swains,
" Among the changes I have ran,
" Dear *B*ſſ*t*, *B*ſſ*t*, is the MAN!"

* Alluding to the *Whim* at Maidſtone Bath.

FINIS.

"My charms 'fore him, my manners meek,
"I ofe display'd with modeſt cheek.
"Gave him full time when reſumed his gig,*
"To gaze, and feaſt his ravith'd eye;
"That reading doer'd eſſaud his peep,
"I, cautious, went but angle deep.
"With him I fought, when him I fu'd,
"That charm, Contrary, ſo long pur'd.
"Among the vagrant train
"Of all my nightly-pleaſing Swains,
"Among the changes I have run,
"Dear D[illegible], D[illegible], is the Man!"

* Alluding to the R[illegible] Addiſons Dial.

5 NO 90
MUSEUM

FINIS.